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LETTER DATED 26 OCTOBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the statement issued today by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia regarding the recent Azerbaijani offensive.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this statement as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alexander ARZOUMANIAN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement issued on 26 October 1993 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia on the recent Azerbaijani offensive

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia condemns the military offensive initiated by Azerbaijani forces in the Jebrayl region on 21 October 1993. These operations continued for three days, despite the restraint shown by the leadership of Nagorny Karabakh, who warned Baku repeatedly of the serious consequences of the military operations. The military offensive ended with the defeat of the Azerbaijani forces by the Self-Defence Forces of Nagorny Karabakh and the capture of a number of prisoners-of-war and heavy equipment from the Azerbaijani side.

The offensive shattered a fragile cease-fire and unleashed a chain of events causing more human suffering and a heightening of tensions and complicating further an already difficult negotiating process.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia is not in a position to determine whether the military operation - involving at least 8 tanks, more than 10 armoured vehicles, artillery and some 500 infantrymen - were initiated by an uncontrolled group, as claimed by some Azerbaijani leaders, or were calculated, constituting clear evidence of a renewed quest for a military solution to the problem of Nagorny Karabakh.

As is well known, Azerbaijan has recently rejected the "Timetable of urgent steps" proposed by the Minsk Group chairmanship and supported by the Security Council as well as all other attempts to consolidate the cease-fire.

It is also significant that the offensive came at the eve of the visit to Baku and Yerevan of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Chairman-in-Office, Swedish Foreign Minister Margaritha af-Ugglas, and the visit to Baku of President Hashemi Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The offensive is part of a pattern of irresponsible behaviour by the Azerbaijani authorities, which are willing to risk lives and the cease-fire for the purpose of scoring propaganda points.

The Government of Azerbaijan remains responsible for the consequences of its senseless acts. In the view of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia, it is incumbent upon all concerned with peace and peaceful negotiations to condemn Azerbaijan.

The Foreign Ministry of Armenia appeals to the main parties to the conflict to respect the temporary cease-fire and to refrain from any action that may endanger the peace process.